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Environmental  
Protection Agency

Bureau of Land  
2200 Churchill Road  
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

May 1994

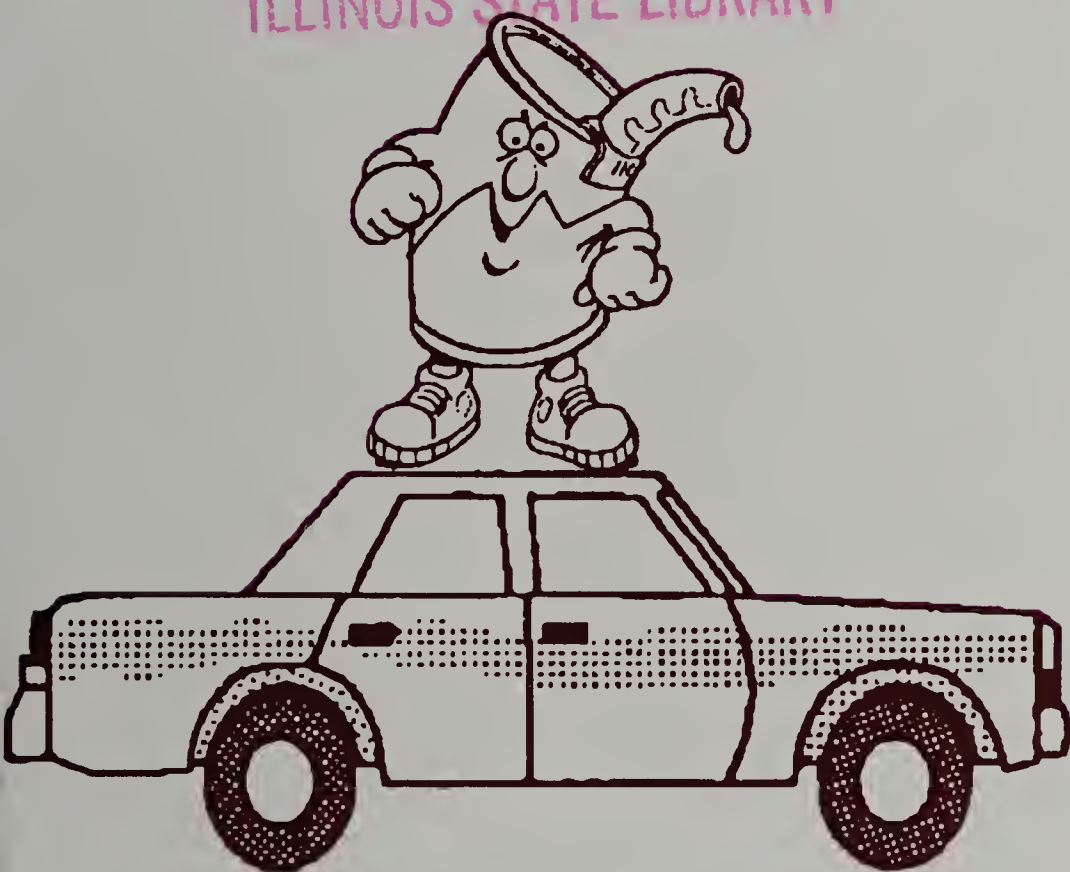
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# Guide to Automotive & Small Engine Product Disposal

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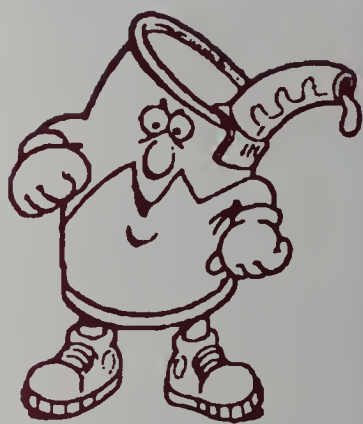
**N**early every home has products in it that may be considered hazardous. When those items are discarded or improperly used they can have devastating effects on sewage systems, septic tanks, and groundwater supplies.

One of the more common hazardous substances found in homes is old or unusable automotive or small engine products. In Illinois, millions of gallons of old motor oil alone are discarded into trash cans or down drains each year. These fluids pollute ground and surface waters and may contaminate drinking water. There are however, much better methods of dealing with your old automotive products.

## **USED MOTOR OIL**

In accordance with Section 21.6 of the Environmental Protection Act, used motor oil will be banned from landfill disposal in Illinois effective July 1, 1996. Used motor oil from automobiles, lawnmowers, snowblowers, etc. can contaminate surface water and groundwater drinking supplies.

Many automotive service stations or community recycling centers will accept used motor oils for recycling. If no disposal outlets are convenient, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency recommends having your vehicles serviced at an automotive repair shop or oil-change facility. These types of facilities employ services to properly recycle or dispose of automotive fluids.



## **ANTIFREEZE**

For residents on a municipal sewage system, old antifreeze may be able to be disposed of in the drain, but only after a few precautions have been taken.

Contact the local waste water treatment facility to determine if it can handle small amounts of antifreeze introduced into the system. If the facility can accept small amounts, dilute the antifreeze with an equal amount of water and dispose down the drain. Do not dump antifreeze down your drain without prior approval from the waste water treatment facility.

*This method is not recommended for residents using a septic system.* Please contact your local service stations and/or recycling center for disposal options. If none are available, store the antifreeze in a safe location until a household hazardous waste collection is scheduled for your area.

## **GASOLINE**

Although gasoline can and does get old, with a little preventive maintenance, an accumulation of old gas can be diverted. Prior to storing your lawnmower, tiller, snowblower, etc., run the engine until all the gas is used up or add a gasoline stabilizer to prevent the gas from becoming old.

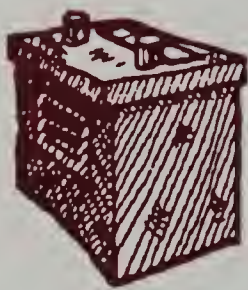
If gas does become old or stale it can be mixed with new gas and used for its intended purpose.

The storage of old gasoline is not recommended unless no other method will suffice. If you must store old gasoline, place it in a specially designed container away from potential heat sources, preferably in an unattached structure or storage building.



## **LEAD ACID BATTERIES**

Section 22.23 of the Environmental Protection Act placed a ban on the landfilling of lead acid batteries effective September 1, 1990. Lead acid batteries, used in cars, boats, motorcycles, etc., can be hazardous to the environment if they are improperly disposed. The best



method of disposal is to return the old battery for recycling at the service center which sells you a new one. By law, retail outlets which sell lead acid batteries must accept old batteries from customers who

purchase new batteries from them.

## **CAR WAXES**

Liquid and paste car waxes, if unused, should be opened and allowed to harden in a safe place away from children, pets, and potential heat sources. Once the material is completely solidified it can be disposed of in the regular garbage.

## **OTHER AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS**

Transmission oil, brake fluid and auto-body repair products should not be thrown into the trash. Check with a friend or neighbor to see if they can use the unwanted portions. If an outlet for the waste is not found, store the product in a safe place away from children or pets and take it to a household hazardous waste collection near you.

## **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTIONS**

If your local service station does not accept your used automotive products, the next best solution is take

them to one of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's household hazardous waste collections. Properly store the waste in a safe place away from

children or pets until a collection is held near your home. The collections are scheduled throughout the





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home. The collections are scheduled throughout the State. Contact the IEPA to find out when and where the collection nearest to you will be.

If a collection has not been scheduled in your area contact your local governmental unit and encourage them to apply for a household hazardous waste collection in your community. The collections are free of charge and not only provide an excellent method to rid your home of old automotive products but also many other hazardous household products.

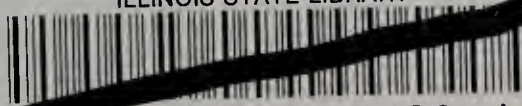
## GENERAL TIPS ON HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS

- Buy only the quantities you need
- Always store products according to label directions. Keep unused products in their original containers.
- Always avoid skin contact and breathing fumes.
- NEVER mix different products. Explosive or violent chemical reactions can occur.

If at all possible find a friend, neighbor, or local organization who can use up the excess products for their intended purposes.

Never dispose of hazardous household products except in an approved manner. When disposed of improperly many hazardous products can contaminate groundwater supplies or disrupt sewage treatment systems and pass through into rivers, lakes, or streams.

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*For more information contact:*

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